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S E R M O N

Preached at ST. DUNSTAN'S IN THE WEST,

On SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 1790,

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE

ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY,

By the Rev. JOSEPH HOLDEN POTT, A. M.

Prebendary of LINCOLN, and Archdeacon of ST. ALBANS.

With an APPENDIX,

Containing Reflections on the Importance of establishing
GENERAL RECEIVING-HOUSES for the Restoration of
PERSONS APPARENTLY DEAD.

Extremus si quis super balitus errat

VIRG. *Æn.* Lib. iv.



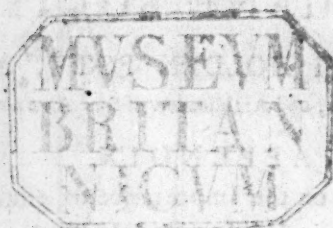
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L O N D O N :

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M,DCC,XC.



ANNIVERSARY MEETING
OF THE SOCIETY.

March 30, 1790.

Ordered unanimously,

THAT the Thanks of this Society be given to the Rev. ARCHDEACON POTT, for his Sermon preached in Favour of this Institution; and that the ARCHDEACON be earnestly requested to publish the same.

W. HAWES, REGISTER.

ANNUARY MEETING
OF THE SOCIETY

General Session

THAT the thanks of the Society be
given to the Rev. Archdeacon POTTS
for his sermon preached in Parish of this
Diocese, and that the Archdeacon
be commended to public notice.

W. H. W. 1844

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,
P A T R O N,

AS A TRIBUTE OF GRATITUDE;

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE EARL OF STAMFORD,
PRESIDENT,

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE, HONOURABLE, AND MOST
RESPECTABLE

LORD BEAUCHAMP, M. P.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE,

HON. PHILIP PUSEY,

SIR JOSEPH ANDREWS, BART.

MR. ALDERMAN SAWBRIDGE, M. P.

MR. ALDERMAN SKINNER,

J. HAWKINS BROWNE, ESQ. M. P.

W. HEBERDEN, M. D. F. R. AND A. SS.

J. C. LETTSOM, M. D. F. R. AND A. SS.

ROBERT BARCLAY, ESQ.

GUSTAVUS A. KEMPENFELT, ESQ.

JOSEPH THOMPSON, ESQ.

THE VICE PRESIDENTS,

AND TO DR. HAWES, REGISTER,

OF THE HUMANE SOCIETY,

AS A MARK OF ESTEEM;

THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS MAJESTY'S MOST DEVOTED SUBJECT,

AND THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

S T E W A R D S
FOR THE YEAR
1790.

RIGHT HON. LORD GREY DE WILTON.

RIGHT HON. WELBORE ELLIS, M. P.

SIR FRANCIS DASHWOOD, BART.

SIR JOHN FREDERICK, BART.

SIR BENJAMIN HAMMET, KNT. AND ALDERMAN.

W. DRAKE, JUN. ESQ. M. P.

REV. DR. ROBERT HAMILTON.

WILLIAM CURTIS, ESQ. AND ALDERMAN.

G. M. MACAULAY, ESQ. AND ALDERMAN.

MR. DEPUTY WHITE.

JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

FRANCIS GROJAN, ESQ.

JOHN JONES, ESQ.

LEWIS PINGO, ESQ.

JOSEPH WILLMOT, ESQ.

JOHN WILLOCK, ESQ.

MR. SAMUEL COLLINS.

MR. WILLIAM MARSH.

II. SAMUEL, XXIII. 17.

*“ Is not this the blood of the men that went
“ in jeopardy of their lives ?”*

THE text directs our notice to a memorable action in the history of David: it is selected as one testimony, exhibited in a chosen servant of the Lord, of a tenderness for the life of man. If no other instance of exalted virtue, of a generous spirit, and a lively sensibility, had been recorded of the King of Israel, this alone would have distinguished his character as noble, amiable, and religious. The Monarch, when pent up in the cave of Adullam during the heat of harvest-time, expressed an hasty wish for the water of the well of Bethlehem, which was in the possession of the enemy; three
B of

of his boldest followers, unauthorized, and not rightly estimating the value of their lives, adventured with a froward gallantry to pierce through the host of the Philistines, and drew water from the well, and brought it to the King. The words of David, on receiving it, express the quick emotion of his mind, and the warmth and humanity of his temper; they declare at the same time his habitual regard of God, who challenges to himself all matters of blood. The sacred narrative sets forth that David would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord, and said, "Be it far from me, "O Lord, that I should do this; is not "this the blood of the men that went in "jeopardy of their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it. The act was eminently heroic, pious, and considerate: it deserves to take the lead in our reflections: but there are not wanting numerous testimonies, that the former generation of God's people were taught to hold the life of man in precious estimation. The laws which God gave by Moses concerning such accidents

as

as might happen to some by the carelessness of others, the many grievous consequences of flight and exile which even accidental slaughter brought upon the Israelite, were all designed to teach men, what it seems they had lived to forget, and are still too apt to overlook,—to be mindful of each other. These instances of God's law come one step nearer to our present purpose: they admonish us, that inattention is one species of inhumanity; they enforce a righteous regard to the blood of others; they recommend a vigilant and apprehensive concern for the lives of men, and a constant care not to furnish an occasion of mortal hazard to them: they teach us also that the guilt of blood may rest in some degree upon the heedless. In all omissions of this part of our common duty, though we look not to the consequences, we shall be liable to the bitter penalty of beholding the natural growth of malice on our own soil, though we neither sowed the seed, nor looked for such an harvest. It will not avail to say

“an enemy has done this”, if we have slept to furnish the occasion.

But our examples do not terminate with the former worshippers of the true God. The same care, the same tenderness, the same provisions and precautions, the same earnest zeal for the preservation of mankind, were most signally encouraged and enhanced by the example of Christ: his desire to save the souls of all men from death, has diffused a measure of this sedulous regard for the lives of others, through every precept, every supplication, every sacred tie, which accompany the covenant of grace. To relieve others in time of peril or distress, is the office of natural compassion; but to endeavour to prevent calamities, the loss of life especially, to provide prompt remedies, to improve the tenderness of fellow-feeling into vigilance, inquiry, and activity, is the part of evangelical charity. The instances and fruits of that true spirit of benevolence appear before us.

The

The means of prolonging life, after every token and appearance of death shall have taken place, now rank among the happy discoveries which Providence has prospered. That these methods of relief and succour should have been disregarded for so many ages, notwithstanding the fondness of relatives, and the sagacity of medical persons, may perhaps excite our wonder ; but let it be considered that the finger of Providence often guides men to discoveries, to which their own intention or inquiries, through the lapse of years, have never been directed. The Syrian Merchant broils his meat upon the sands of the river Belus, and glass runs from the embers *; and he who desired only to satisfy his hunger, becomes the founder of a new art. The Deer is stricken, and flies to the Dictamnium †; and the hunter carries home a new vulnerary, and learns to heal, where he only meant to kill. By whatever indications of Providence the first promoters of this institution were led to conceive and to

* PLIN. Nat. Hist.

† PLIN. Lib. viii, c. 27.

to make trial of the means which they have administered with such successful industry, we cannot but feel a strong desire, after glorifying God the great author of all mercies, to bestow just praises upon those who first encountered the weak prejudice of gainsayers, who have prosecuted the benevolent design with diligence and fervour, and have endeavoured to awaken in their fellow-creatures a due sense of its importance. But where benevolence, not fame, constitutes the prime motive and ultimate object, there will be little contest for the credit of discovery. To cherish and enlarge the scheme, to erect it upon firm foundations, to provide enduring and sufficient resources for its permanent support, must be the great attempt of the compassionate and pious. No endeavours can be so necessary, so laudable, or so consistent with the Divine Will, as those which tend to supply to man, by prudent aids, what he wants of the endowments which are given to inferior animals. Such supplies have this advantage, (and the method of the remedy accounts for

for the deficiency), that they exercise the industry and art of man, they induce him to depend upon the favour of Providence for the success of every means of succour, and to bless God for their discovery. The Horse, whose accustomed pasture borders on the brook, if a sudden torrent, or the dissolution of the snows of winter should raise the stream above its banks, mounts on the flood, and without reflection finds himself superior to the waters, and swims with ease to the next hill: whilst his master, surpris'd perhaps in his cottage, and carried headlong with its ruins into the current, amazed and affrighted, makes some ineffectual and unskilful struggles, which tend only to accelerate the triumph of the waters, and sinks into the flood. The disparity is sufficiently striking; it must employ the foresight and inventive skill of man to balance the defect: to which great purpose the aids of this Society are set forth in the world. Before we proceed to urge this branch and portion of our duty, it may be expedient to advert to an opinion which
requires

requires to be corrected : it is no less than a false estimate of life itself, which would cast a cloud, if it were suffered to obtain, upon our whole design. That our mortal life is vain and fleeting, open to exigencies and sufferings, to losses and calamities of many kinds ; that it is a shadow and a flower ; the visit of a guest in haste ; the breath and minutes of a tale that is told, and passes to oblivion ; that such are just resemblances, and applicable to our sublunary state, is surely true : and whoever courts a shade, or doats upon a flower, or pins his happiness upon a guest that must depart so speedily, or makes the telling of his tale in this world the substance of his whole intention, will be vainer than the shadow or the flower, more restless than the guest who cannot tarry, and light and unimportant as the tale which only gains a hearing. That in some states poverty afflicts, or toil impairs the frame and faculties of man ; that in others, pleasure breeds satiety ; that riches canker in the chest, or make blind the eyes of their possessors ; that all affections placed on

earthly

earthly objects, tend to wed us to perishable things ; that honour, fame, and reputation, fluctuate upon a changeful and capricious surface ; that wisdom frequently makes us despicable to ourselves ; that power inclines us to oppress each other ; that the curse glanced from the head of the first Sinner to the Earth ; that all the face of nature shifts and varies, has its periods and declensions, and its stages of oblivion ; these testimonies are delivered on the credit of inevitable experience, and on the certain documents of Revealed Religion. Divine truth adds this comment concerning him who trusts in vanity, that “ vanity shall be his recompense :” he will scent the fruit, but chew on dust and ashes. But the inference to which we have alluded, and which we fear may have been drawn from these true circumstances in the condition of mankind, is rash, unchristian, and fallacious. To infer that life upon the whole is not desirable, that to detain the hovering spirit, to restore the vital heat, and to urge the blood into its wonted channels, will be to

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practise

practise a mistaken tenderness, is false in every case, and in some it may be cruelly injurious. That the inference is untrue in all cases, will readily appear. It excludes the purposes of virtue from the ends of being; it discards all thought of man's religious nature; it banishes all considerations which are attached to his condition with regard to covenanted mercies; it shuts out all the excellent and infinite degrees of attainment to which life administers. If no one be so eminent in virtue during this life, but that he may attain to nobler heights; if he who shall follow virtue by the Christian rule, which is always progressive, will climb each day to better prospects; if no one be so holy but that he may advance yet nearer to the Divine perfections, the pattern which is set forth for our imitation; we shall learn the value of life upon terms the most severe. Without doubt, life, with the conditions under which it is vouchsafed to us, is an incomparable, an inestimable blessing: it is the field of opportunity for every possible degree of happiness, when
considered

considered in its views to futurity ; and if present benefits lose much of their weight in the scale of Christ's sanctuary, it is because they are borne down by much superior blessings ; they are cast far behind the glories of more animating promises. But for the consolation of the pious mind, we might trace once more our former estimate of things present, according to the measures of religion. We should then discover, that the shadow has relation to a substance which shall never vanish ; that the flower, with all its droopings, gives a sweetness whilst it lasts, and casts a seed when it decays ; that the guest shall meet us in a permanent abode, and the tale remain a record in our favour, and an evidence for good. We should then perceive that poverty and toil, that riches, honour, wisdom, power, with whatever marks the character of men in this world, or exercises their endeavours, may be governed by the laws of true religion, and ordered to good ends ; that the tyrants of the mind may become its vassals ; that the crooked may be made straight, the vale exalted,

exalted, and the mountain brought low ; and that in the whole variety of transitory things, the heart which is attached to none, may be superior to all, may employ them to good purposes, or despise them for more excellent attainments. Where the faculties of the mind or body shall be abridged by age and infirmity ; where the dim eye and feeble knee, the failing memory and slow conception, indicate a decline that hastens to its utmost period ; where the traveller walks slowly, with disfigured looks, and empty veins, through the latter stages of his journey ; yet “ the spirit of a man will “ sustain his infirmity,” and life adorned with patience, built up in confidence, and cheered by expectation, will retain its whole importance. Time may deprive us of some active powers for the promotion of the cause of virtue and religion in the world ; some scenes of life, and some parts of duty, may be fulfilled as we pass forward in our course ; but the same relation to our heavenly Father, the same power of recommending ourselves to him by a perfect resignation to his providence,

dence, and by a true submission to his laws, will still continue. The services which we may strive to render to others in our best times of strength and prosperity are liable to fail ; they are bounded by our means and opportunities, which are very narrow and imperfect : the services which we can render to the public cause of truth and piety are not exempted from the frailties of our nature ; with the best desires, and with the purest motives, we may do things unseasonably or unprofitably ; our endeavours for the benefit of our fellow-creatures may miscarry with respect to them ; but in all these instances the improvement of our own character before God will not be at all impeded : this stamps the true value of life ; this is the only work of man whose issues are infallible, over which time has no power, and fortune no authority. It is true that this discovery was made by the light and revelation of the Gospel. If we regard the times when men meted with other measures, it will abate a little of our wonder, though nothing of our horror, that the savage, swayed by false conclusions, and by the prevalence

prevalence of evil customs, should suppress the dictates of his nature, and expose the old and the decrepid members of his household to perish ; and that the two chief masters * of philosophy in Greece should no less barbarously proscribe the weak and sickly as worthless persons, and banish the physician as contributing by his art to continue such men in society. But the Christian philosopher does not form his estimate of personal worth from bodily endowments, or from the power of prosecuting worldly things ; he knows that no man can have fulfilled the end of his being, because that end consists in an entire submission to Providence, in continuing to bear its dispensations of what kind soever with fortitude and cheerfulness. The sagacious hound, or labouring ox, may have fulfilled their parts in life, and may have a portion of existence useless to their owners, however necessary in the course of nature ; the cedar of the mountain, and the oak of the forest, may

* PLATO de Repub. lib. iii.—ARISTOT. lib. vii.—POL. c. xvi.

may grow to maturity, and after that period decline, and at last become worthless to the builder ; but with man, the exercise of reason can never be so complete as to supersede its use. The patient fortitude of Christian faith may gather strength amidst the injuries of time, and the feebleness of age. Though the senses fail, and the power of moving be lost, yet the soul abides entire, and often with fresh force, and with more clear exertions, as the bodily supplies run out : a sure indication that that which becomes stronger as the body rushes to decay, will not follow it to the dust. Let not therefore the sensual man deceive himself, from our applauses and esteem of this life. When considered in its views to a better, and as preparatory in all its stages and degrees to a richer portion in that country which we profess to seek, it deserves our best regard : but the full and perfect life will begin without doubt when the soul shall be withdrawn from the corruptible body, from those instruments and organs which are now so liable to disorder. The soul will one day exercise its faculties with perfect

perfect vigour, unimpeded by those weights which now depress it: it will see, but not as through a glass; it will know, even as it is known; it will understand, but not by slow degrees; to the light of conscience, the results of reason and experience, and the bond of duty, will succeed the whole glory of a spiritual nature, a perfect vision, a clear intelligence, an unencumbered will. We may be certain however that, had not this life been a great blessing, the successive retrenchments of it for the growth and prevalence of sin, would have been no punishment. Had the notions before examined been well founded, our Lord would probably have replied to the solicitations of the friends of Lazarus, and to others who brought similar petitions, as he did to the sons of Zebedee, "Ye know not what ye ask:" nor would he so readily have exercised his divine power to recall men to a worthless existence. But our Lord had declared, that when the night should come, no man could work: he knew the great importance of the work to

to be accomplished, and its proportionable recompense ; and if the sun stood still, by the will of God, for Joshua to pursue his enemies, a far stronger motive existed for restoring many to its light, that they might follow their great leader with new ardour, and obtain more signal victories over the great enemy of mankind. But let us also remember, that in many cases the omission of our endeavours for preserving the lives of our fellow-creatures would be eminently cruel. Doubtless the benevolent agents of the work of charity which now solicits our regard, have frequently been the chosen instruments of Providence to continue the course of the natural life, and to open the channels and first issues of the spiritual life. The hand which may have been lifted up toward heaven through the veil of waters, may be raised again in supplication and thanksgiving, and may discharge the wages of iniquity for ever. They who may have disregarded, with a blindness but too common, the unremitting care of Providence over the life of man, may be eager to

D acknowledge

acknowledge a deliverance so signal. It is more than a restoration to the paths and occupations of this life, that is effected; it is the renewal of the opportunities and means of Grace. The whole benefit of redemption, is the blessing tendered. If by the goodness of Providence, and by the exertions of charity, the sentence due for impenitence shall thus be suspended, and by a right use of the favour quite reversed, the brightest blessing of divine mercy, and the richest act of human tenderness, will be accomplished. Let us for a moment compare the glory of that rescue which preserves a fellow-creature, the gratulations which attend it, and the just esteem for life which prompts and encourages these efforts of benevolence, with the horror of that desperate and impatient rage, that sullen or indignant spirit, which spurns the will of God, and despises his best gift, the breath of life, the subject of his choicest favours. To invite and embrace that death, a dread of which the Almighty has planted in our nature for the wisest ends; to brave the
 terrors

terrors of that fearful change; to provoke disdainfully the wrath of God, upon the spur and pressure of a present evil, of which we know neither the consequences nor extent; to remove for ever from the remedies and refuge of repentance; to repel with scorn and violence the last attendant upon human miseries, by dismissing hope from the concluding scene of life; to despise thus rashly all the good and all the evil in the universe, might deserve a heavy note of censure in this place: but the same mercy which prevents the purpose of self-directed malice, extends its lenient hand and friendly invitation to sooth the griefs of the unfortunate, and to fulfil the hope and consolation of the penitent. Let it only be remembered carefully, that by continuing to us the functions of life, God plainly shows that he intends we should continue in our stations, and not presumptuously return the grant upon the donor, because we do not at the moment understand or feel its value.

It appears then, that the care of life ranks among the leading offices of charity. The disciples of Christ were directed by apostolical authority to call in the aids of the ministry to restore the sick. The disciples of Christ were distinguished also in all times for their reverent attention to their dead. The belief of the resurrection, after the certainty of that event had been so gloriously attested in our Lord's person, operated powerfully to produce a greater respect for the body which should be glorified : but it is the peculiar glory of our age and country, to perform in many cases new offices of charity, where the sad appearances of death may have taken place, and to use new methods for restoring the vital energies, before the last honours shall be bestowed. Whatever be the process of dissolution, from its first beginnings to its final accomplishment, we are now made sensible, that the folly of the husbandman who should cut down his vine when the sap returns to the root and the leaf falls, would be scarce less

less considerable than the carelessness and inconsideration of those who take the bare appearance of suspended faculties, and the first interruption of the vital powers, for inevitable death. We are now convinced, that the whole strength and resistance of the body may be cast down, the dark and livid colours of the countenance may present to inexperienced eyes the troubled image of corruption, a settled horror may succeed the wonted order and composure of the features, before the final separation shall take place. It constitutes a great object of this benevolent Society, to make provision in such cases; more especially in violent and sudden incidents, that the willing activity and zeal of some, for the preservation of a fellow-creature, may not be impeded by the churlish selfishness of others. They who have been accustomed to close the gate against the stranger and the indigent, will shut it, with disdainful eagerness, against the squalid corpse, and the throng of the inquisitive. The operation of pecuniary bounties may tend to set aside this obstacle; but the establish-

establishment of appropriate houses, more especially in maritime towns, would render the remedy more full. This therefore is one aim of the Society, as their fund and their abilities shall be augmented. The spirit of undaunted courage, animated by the generous order of compassion, is frequently displayed upon our coasts. Neither the darkness of the wintry night, nor the clamours of the tempest, nor the rage of the tumultuous surf, can prevent the bold attempt to save the shipwrecked mariner. The cries of distress pierce deeper than the shrillness of the wind. If in that enterprise, they who carry succour, go in jeopardy of their lives, yet the blood of man may be the recompense. Is it a light thing to instruct the brave adventurers not to leave the breathless body clinging to the wreck, because the head hangs, or the eye does not look toward the deliverer ; because the struggle is past, and the breast heaves no more ? Is it a light thing to teach them, that their courage may effect some greater benefit, than the rescue of a body for the decent grave and

and holy rite? to inspire them with the hope that they who have defied the storm, and baffled the strong surge, and despised Death in their own persons, may snatch his prey from him, after the sad tokens of his triumph seem displayed?

True recitals and authentic narratives form the best recommendations of this excellent institution: there are abundance on its records: but may we not suggest in general, on the ground of those attested facts, that if the mother, in the ordinary course of events, rejoices at the birth of her infant, and forgets the sorrows of her travail for joy that a child is born into the world; surely the rapture and the benefit must be greater, should that child, already full of promise, endeared perhaps by growing habits of virtue, or by some cultivated powers of genius, be recovered from the confines and first shadows of the grave. If the patriarch Joseph wept with joy, to hear that his aged father was yet alive; surely the joy must be more full, when a parent, after all the evidence
of

of death hath been exhibited, shall be restored to his dependant family ; when the main knot of the whole sheaf, which was loosened, shall be made firm again ; when the corner-stone, which was falling, shall be thus replaced ; when the strength and sinews of an helpless multitude, unexpectedly cast down, shall be thus renewed. Surely He who sanctified the gladness of the bride-chamber by his presence, will also sanctify that joy which takes place when wedded hands, divided by some strange or sudden blow, shall thus be reunited by the aids of charity.

It may seem superfluous to substitute weak words for a simple contemplation of the living witnesses of exulting charity. We may add however one important suggestion, because it is perhaps the only one of which many may want to be apprised : that a liberal support is still absolutely necessary ; that the preservation and extension of the plan depend upon it. The annual contribution of each charitable friend is so small,
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so inconsiderable, in proportion to the benefit which it promotes, that the invitation tendered to us to unite ourselves to the permanent and faithful guardians and supporters of this institution, becomes more pressing and more general. It is no disparagement to the first increase of charity, to be dependant upon voluntary bounty ; it is no matter of reproach, that its first stock be gratuitous. It was thus in the commencement of both covenants : the legal Tabernacle was first built by the voluntary offerings of superfluous ornaments, though the priesthood and the Temple services were afterwards endowed with permanent and ample revenues. The first stock of charity under the Gospel was from the voluntary contributions of the zeal of its prime converts, till the Almighty gave the Kings of the earth as nursing-fathers to his church, and till the fund of charity and the portion of the Christian priesthood were established as essential parts of the regimen of Christian States. It deserves our special notice, and should no less excite our emulation, that

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the number of the charitable whose names appear upon the lists of the Society does not equal half the number of the lives which have been saved. So eminently has the favour of Divine Providence blessed the zeal of the benevolent ! The united voices of those who went in jeopardy of their lives, their whole importance in society, with all their interests, and all the benefits that time may have wrought in their behalf, solicit from us the return of new endeavours, both on the score of gratitude for the past, and of good-will for the future.

This offspring of Benevolence, whose cause we now plead, has been adopted like the infant Moses under royal patronage : it grows still, and exercises its increasing vigour with increasing diligence : but one hand must recline upon the generous arm of public favour, in order that the other may have power to drag the sinking body from the waters, or to lift it from the stunning blow of sudden violence. But if this child of charity shall in time come to
be

be enfranchised from precarious dependance, it will be no slender witness of your generous efforts that you will present it as the pious matron of Israel did her dedicated child, her first-born Samuel, healthful and well clad; weaned from the early wants of infancy, and well grown.

Let us then, from the motives of charity towards God, whose glory shines forth in every act of benevolence; from the motives of charity toward each family, that may receive again into its circle a dear relative; let us, from the motives of loyalty toward a benign Sovereign, to whom we may present the best tribute of rescued subjects; let us, from the impulses of human nature, and for the love of him who condescended to assume it for our sakes, be forward and industrious in fostering, in defending, in promoting this important work of charity. We may use again the words of holy David without much perversion, when we sum up the gain of our endeavours, "Is it not the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?"

Above

Above all, let us remember that the best and only warrant for good expectations will be to recommend the desires of our hearts, and the work of our hands, to the blessing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; to whom be attributed all honour, glory, and praise, might, majesty, and dominion, now and for evermore.

T H E E N D.

E R R A T A.

P. 7, line 13, for *suprisea*, read *surprised*.

22. — 7, for *order*, read *ardour*.

APPENDIX,

APPENDIX.

REFLECTIONS

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ESTABLISHING

RECEIVING-HOUSES

FOR THE

RESTORATION OF PERSONS APPARENTLY DEAD.

Salus populi suprema lex.

THE views of the Royal Humane Society have been principally directed to the recovery of those who have been drowned; and it is an important truth, that on the water the beneficial effects of this Institution have been abundantly experienced. A variety of fortunate circumstances contributed to this end: accidents on that element often occur in public view; persons in the neighbourhood are now happily qualified by observation and practice to afford assistance, and are stimulated to works of humanity by the rewards of the Society.

When

When sudden death happens in the public street, or elsewhere, too often the consideration of inconvenience overcomes the dictates of humanity, and no friendly door is open to receive the bodies of those who may be apparently dead; or if there be, the attendants are ignorant of the means of resuscitation.

It has been proved, beyond a doubt, that in various instances of apparent sudden death, and even in certain diseases which carry off mankind, suspension of the vital powers may take place independent of the absolute extinction of life; and it is now an established maxim, that the *coldness of the body, the frigidity of the limbs, and the total abolition of the external senses*, are very dubious and fallacious signs of death. It is not then to be wondered at, that the absurd and pernicious custom of laying out the bodies of persons supposed to be dead, as soon as *respiration* ceases, should have occasioned the *premature dissolution* of great numbers of the human race.—As, for example,

1 ft.

1st, In APOPLEXIES, TRANCES, SYNCOPE, and FITS.

2dly, CONVULSIONS in YOUNG CHILDREN have caused an immense number of infants to be prematurely committed to the grave.

3dly, On POISONS, OPIUM, or SPIRITS, producing a state of insensibility, and an appearance of the departure of life, expeditious and judicious medical practice may be productive of rescuing the unfortunate and miserable from the horrid crime of suicide.

The various circumstances in which the state of apparent death may take place, have been briefly described: it is therefore hoped that prudence, humanity, and natural affection, will so far prevail, as to induce relatives and friends, in all doubtful cases, to consult the Faculty on the appearance of death; as by such conduct the most valuable lives may be preserved.

Monfieur

Monfieur THIREY, Doctor Regent of the Faculty at Paris, in a work juft publifhed, is of opinion, that “ one third, “ or perhaps *half* of thofe who die in their “ beds, are *not actually dead* when they are “ buried.”—He does not mean to fay, that fo great a number would be reftored to life; but feems to fuppofe that in what he calls the *intermediate ftate*, which reaches from the infant of apparent death to that of the total extinction of life, the body is not infenfible to the treatment it receives, though unable to give any figns of fenfibility.—The AUTHOR recommends the example of the ENGLISH to his countrymen *.

A decrease of population has been warmly afferted; with what juftice, it is not our bufinefs to determine. This however is certain, that the PRESERVATION OF LIFE, and confequent increafe of the people, are worthy of particular attention.

It

* See Reports of the Royal Humane Society for 1787, 1788, and 1789.

It is a lamentable truth, that as the Medical Assistants and other Gentlemen of the Faculty are now situated, they have not an opportunity of affording that assistance which they might otherwise give, by their attention, skill and humanity. They are, in cases of sudden death, introduced to scenes of distress and confusion, and thereby prevented rendering their professional aid to such unfortunate persons.—If the miserable object wears the ensigns of poverty; the catastrophe is generally in the open street, amidst a crowd of spectators who cannot be furnished with any of the means to forward the practitioner in his endeavours to restore animation. Even of those who are thus in a moment arrested by death, and have the appearance of a better fortune, the situation is but little mended: the body indeed may be raised from the ground, and placed on a shop-floor, &c. but still the same confusion prevails; and the Faculty, on being sent for, have to regret the want of necessary as well as proper assistance, in order to rouse the latent spark of life.

The necessity of GENERAL Receiving-Houses, where every thing suitable and requisite to cooperate with the philanthropic efforts of medical men might be immediately and readily furnished, appears therefore evident to a demonstration. The ingenious and learned Doctor FOTHERGILL observes,

“ The success of the Humane Society has
 “ been very great, under all the disadvantages of popular prejudice, the scarcity of
 “ suitable apparatus, the distance from skilful medical aid, and still more the want of
 “ proper RECEIVING-HOUSES. What may
 “ not be expected when these are established
 “ in proper districts, and when this institution, as in other countries, becomes
 “ an object of the national police; when
 “ the learned of the Faculty, convinced of
 “ its utility, shall unite in their endeavour
 “ to supply the remaining deficiencies, and
 “ to cultivate the important art of restoring
 “ animation, with the same zeal that they
 “ apply themselves to other branches of
 “ science? May we then hope that similar
 “ institutions will be established at sea-
 “ ports

“ ports, &c. under the auspices of a British
 “ KING and a British PARLIAMENT,
 “ extending their directions and encourage-
 “ ment for the restoration of their unfor-
 “ tunate fellow-creatures from every species
 “ of apparent death ?”—*Hints for restoring*
Animation, p. 6, 7.

The Rev. Mr. AGUTTER, in his Sermon
 on the *Origin and Importance of Life*,
 preached in favour of this institution,
 judiciously observes, “ It appears that
 “ APOPLEXIES, FITS, and SUDDEN
 “ DEATHS, are more frequent in England
 “ than in any other country. I shall not stop
 “ to examine into the particular causes :
 “ perhaps a general repletion, too intense
 “ application to thought and business, and
 “ the varieties of our climate, may contri-
 “ bute to produce them. From whatever
 “ cause they may proceed, it certainly would
 “ be very desirable to have every help at
 “ hand, which such extreme and alarming
 “ cases can require.”

The number of citizens are the riches of the State. Every method therefore which promises to secure their health or restore their lives, ought most certainly to be generally known, and publicly supported.

Since the Commencement of this Institution the TREASURER has paid the Rewards of TWO THOUSAND and FIFTEEN Cases, viz.

PERSONS RESTORED TO LIFE WHO HAD BEEN DROWNED, OR OTHERWISE SUFFOCATED *	—	—	890
LIVES PRESERVED, BY THE DRUGS, &c. OF THE SOCIETY	—		611
UNSUCCESSFUL CASES	—		514
			<u>2015</u>

* In order to render those persons who have been restored to life, sensible of the obligations they owe to the Supreme Being for the great mercies received, they are presented with a *Bible*, a *Prayer-book*, "*The great Importance of a Religious Life, &c.*" and it is a circumstance of infinite satisfaction to those benevolent and pious characters who have favoured the Humane Society with their countenance and support, that many of those rescued from the watery grave, and other kinds of premature death, appear, by their course of life, truly sensible of the great mercy of Divine Providence.

(37)

1788.

The BENEFITS and REWARDS of the
HUMANE SOCIETY

EXTENDED TO
PORTSMOUTH, PORTSEA, and GOSPORT.

1789.

JAMES SHOVELLIER,
RESTORED TO HIS WIFE AND TEN CHILDREN,
By Mr. G A S E L E E,
One of the MEDICAL ASSISTANTS
AT
PORTSMOUTH, &c.

HUMANE INSTITUTIONS that have
been established in consequence of every
necessary assistance and information af-
forded by the Managers of the
ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY.

LISBON,

PHILADELPHIA,
BOSTON,
JAMAICA,
DUBLIN,
LEITH,
ABERDEEN,
WORCESTER,
GLOUCESTER,

SHROPSHIRE,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE,
LANCASTER,
BRISTOL,
WHITEHAVEN,
NORWICH,
KENT,
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE.

Few

Few beneficent Institutions upon the record of history, or of the present age, have had stronger claim on the feelings and interests of mankind, collectively and individually, than the Humane Society; more especially as its benefits are now extended to various parts of this Kingdom, to Ireland, and even to the Trans-atlantic regions.

THE PUBLICATIONS WHICH GAINED
THE HONORARY MEDALS
OF THE
HUMANE SOCIETY.

1st. *The Connexion of Life with Respiration,*
BY
EDMUND GOODWYN, M. D.

2d. *An Essay on the Recovery
of the
Apparently Dead,*

By C. KITE, Member of the Corporation of Surgeons, and one of the Medical Assistants.

T H E R E P O R T S
OF THE
ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY;
For the Years 1787, 1788, and 1789.

WITH AN
A P P E N D I X
OF
MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS
ON THE SUBJECT OF
SUSPENDED ANIMATION.

Death may usurp on Nature many Hours;
And yet the Fire of Life kindle again
The o'er-prest Spirits—

SHAKESPEARE.

THIS INSTITUTION, by engaging the attention of ingenious men to an important subject, has contributed to the improvement of medical science. It is now beyond a doubt, that great numbers who, apparently dead, have remained unassisted till they were really so, might have been resuscitated, *had the public, &c. been better acquainted with the certain and uncertain signs of death, the causes which may suspend life without destroying it, and the most probable and powerful means of restoring animation.*

TO SUCH AS ARE INCLINED TO BECOME
BENEFACTORS BY WILL,
THE FOLLOWING FORM
IS RECOMMENDED.

ITEM, *I give and bequeath unto A. B. and C. D. the Sum of*
to be raised and paid, by and out of my personal Estate and Effects, which by Law I may or can charge with the Payment thereof, upon Trust, and to the Intent, that they, or either of them, do pay the same to the Treasurer of a Charity, known by the Name of the
ROYAL

ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY ; *which said Sum I desire may be applied to the benevolent Designs of that Institution.*

N. B. Giving Land, or Money, or Stock, by Will, to be laid out in the purchase of any Estate, for charitable Uses, will be void by the Statute of Mortmain ; but Money or Stock may be given by Will, without being directed to be laid out.

S U B S C R I P T I O N S
AND
B E N E F A C T I O N S

ARE RECEIVED BY

The Hon. BARON DIMSDALE,
SONS, BARNARD, and STAPLES.

Messrs. DRUMMONDS and Company.

Messrs. LANGSTONS, TOWGOODS,
and AMORY,

Messrs. DOWN, THORNTON, and FREE,

Rev. RUSSELL SCOTT, *Portsmouth.*

B. C. COLLINS, Esq. *Salisbury.*

Dr. LETTSOM, *Sambrook-house.*

Dr. HAWES, *Bury-street, St. Mary Axe,*

AND

Dr. FOTHERGILL, *Bath.*

On the absurdity of an Opinion,
"THAT DEAD BODIES ARE NOT TO BE REMOVED
"UNTIL THE CORONER HAS
"HELD AN INQUEST ON THEM."

C A S E.

The ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY for the recovery of persons from apparent death, among many laudable exertions for the restoration of life, have published their successful modes of practice, which have been presented *gratis* to the Public for several years. But their benevolent views have in some instances been frustrated, from an idea that it is contrary to law to meddle with dead bodies until the Coroner's jury have taken an inquisition; by which delay *frequent instances* have occurred wherein lives, otherwise redeemable, have been totally lost.

Q U E S T I O N.

Are there any, and what statutes, or other laws, now in existence, in any manner prohibiting persons, other than the Coroner and his jury, from intermeddling with human bodies dead, or apparently dead, from drowning, suffocating, strangling, &c.?

A N S W E R.

It is a misdemeanor by the common law, and an indictable offence, to prevent the Coroner from doing his duty, or to obstruct him in the execution of it. But the meddling with a body apparently dead, for the purpose of preserving life, is not a transgression of the law in either of these respects; nor do I know any statute by which such an act is prohibited. In such cases the CORONER ought certainly to be called in, as soon as it is evident that the body is dead. If this precaution be taken, it is not probable that the removing of a dead body from the place where it is found, for the benevolent purpose above mentioned, should ever be made the subject of a criminal prosecution: but if it should be, the party would undoubtedly be acquitted, upon proving that his interposition was with the design of preserving life, and that the CORONER had an opportunity of taking an inquest on the body as soon as that interposition appeared to be in vain.

W. HAWES, Register.

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